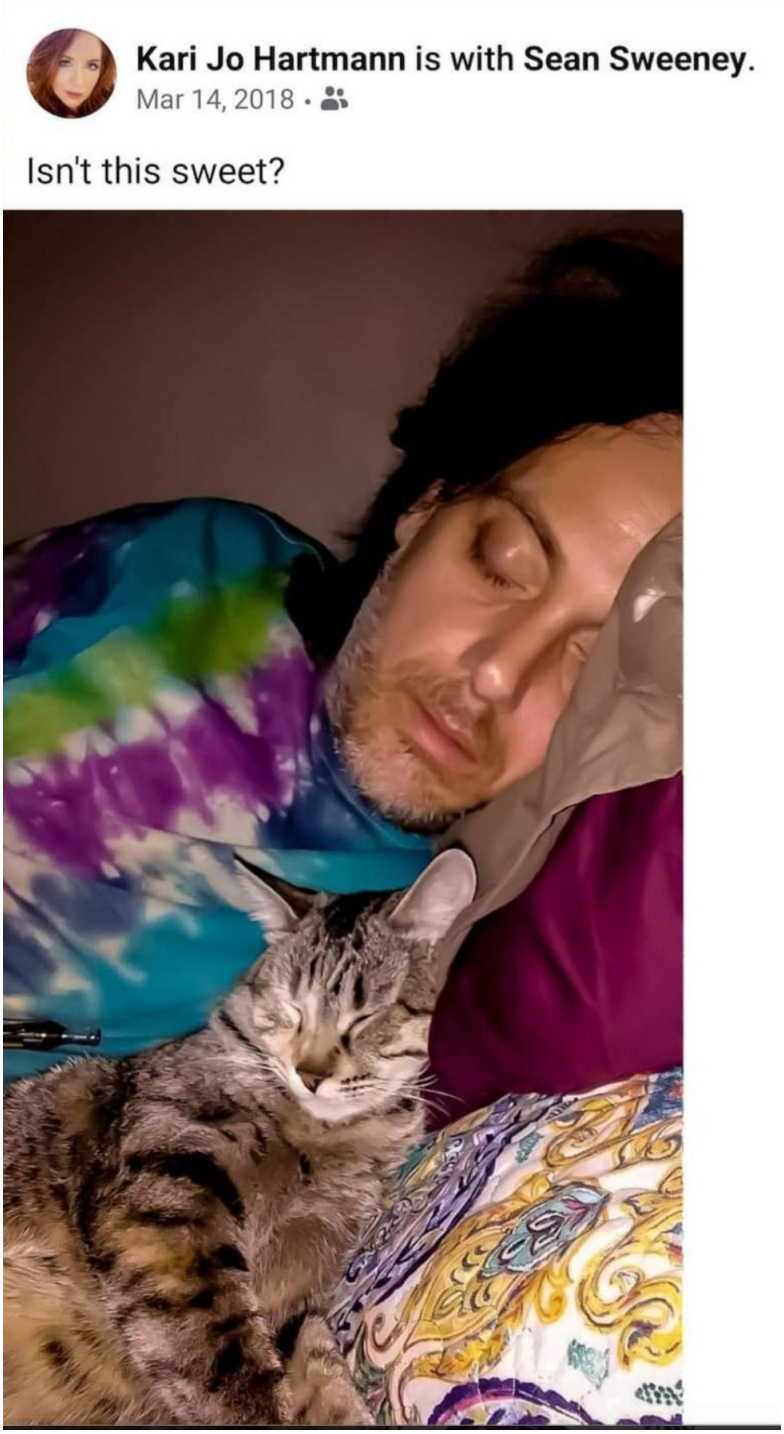
I know it's her birthday in a few days... and I know it's the second one... it's not fresh anymore... but it's worse... because the world didn't stop spinning or even slow down, like I hoped... and I don't recognize the person I've become... i've been working like crazy and neglecting the cat... who used to be my best friend next to her... and she would catch her laying with me and pout... "I feed you, I give you treats every time you meow... I change your litterbox and your water every day..." "Yea... how can she respect you after you do all that?" Then she took a picture and showed it to all of her friends...

So I'm working day and night... trying not to lose it and the cat hasn't shut up in a few hours and I scream at the cat and the cat looks scared and run away... and I catch a view of myself in the mirror and wilt. Wtf, dude.... and call her and pet her and feel like the worst person on the planet... apologizing to a cat that for all I know feels it as bad as I do, still... and I think it's time to see a therapist or two, but I don't

think it'll help... after the last one... who I think I helped a good deal! Lol. She was in an abusive relationship, and I had her for six months. And I knew it wasn’t exactly the textbook version of therapy. That perhaps I was helping her more than she helped me by describing this relationship that I had been in… and I really didn’t understand why... and then she accidentally forwarded all of her calls to my number. And it had gone on for a couple of days and I didn’t understand it first what was going on... which was really strange Answer colleagues called and various patients called my number the name they asked for seemed familiar but I had only ever heard her first name that she used and not her last name as she was referred to by her colleagues Price come on man... and eventually her husband called... and wanted to know what I was doing answering his WIFE's phone... and I thought about the oddness of that question... and then I rattled off the answer, which turned out to be correct. And then he KNEW who I was and said I was ruining their marriage?... and so I hung up on him... and so my therapist told me in a text that she was moving. That she would forward my info to the next person there. Which didn’t happen… but I honestly needed a little break from therapy. And I know no one will believe this. I hope she got away from that jerk, but I doubt she did.

I probably shouldn't take everything as a SIGN of something... because even if it was, there ain't a G****ned thing I could do about it anyway...

This is her week and I'm working on a lot of stuff... the next piece is a particularly



memorable chapter... in life, in this book... and the songs that came from it...

On a side note... I think my stomach has become a coal oven that burns all night and day... causing my heart to boil and steam to rise up and condense in my eyes... sometimes it's literally like a geyser...

For those who haven't heard, this is song number six, of songs that I never thought I would ever hear... and you'll probably agree with me, that buying the software, checking every hard drive, going back 16 years, and the subsequent thousand hours were worth it... it's not just a song from the love of my life... it's an amazing song all around... every word toiled over and every note reached for... except on this one she was sick and had no air moving through her nose... and that's why I deleted it... actually I deleted it because she asked me to... but I still had the music and we would try it again... which never happened... so I hunted high and low and finally found one version of it being sung... and some of it was missing... and then there was the part where she was horribly sick... and sounds like she's holding her nose...

Somehow I was able to correct all of that... a complicated task... like minting bitcoin in your colon... i'm guessing.

And here's that miracle.

https://archive.org/download/rose-of-dawn-time-comp-mix-dec-29-final/Rose%20of%20Dawn%20%20TIME%20COMP%20MIX%20dec%2029%20%20final.mp3

Chapter 8 (2011)

Chapter 8

All the time, the years, our lives and the songs went ticking by...

and now it was 2011. 8 years after we met. About 2 years after we started our songwriting and things were ok. She had been sober for a year and a half and she had just graduated from drug court and my birthday was coming up. She asked me if I wanted to come over to celebrate her graduating and my birthday. I said definitely! We had some reasons to celebrate... I had come to really love our times together and when she was sober, we were a very compatible couple. There had been some serious ups and downs. already. It made me wonder at what I really was to her, but I was still here and she was still very engaged with me... into whatever time we spent... I knew it meant something to her, because unlike the old Kari who wouldn’t keep plans, the new Kari looked forward to our time together. She was beautiful and her mind and voice and body were all amazing and I felt like I was the only guy who knew how amazing she was. She was a goddess to me, but I didn’t know after all this time what she really thought about me!

August 14th 2011 (my birthday).

I arrived at her house after dark, so it was a little late. She gave me a hug and a kiss... off to a good start. She said “I have some surprises for you”... “oh yea?” “yes... I can’t wait”.

I had brought some Bud Light Lime, even though she had not drank it for a while, but I still liked it and wanted to remind her of our first years together... and she asked me if I could bring something fun to party with, as she had been sober for something like 8 months. I brought a few pain pills that I got at the bar and of course my guitars and pedal effects.

She led me out to the barn, where she had the golf cart they used to get to and fro over their large parcel of land out there. We both got in and she drove for a few minutes, in the dark moonlit night, out through the fields on the trail they had made years ago to run the dogs and get to the various areas, and came to a clearing where there was lots of tall grass... she pulled out a large, old, hand-made quilt and laid it on the grass. The moon was huge and bright and lit up the field with seemingly brilliant white light. We lay down and looked up at the sky and sipped the girly beers... I pulled out the tiny pills that I had paid dearly for... “what are those?” “I don’t know, but they’re supposed to be good... they’re expensive at least!” so I popped mine and she chewed hers up... and we lay there cuddling and touching and stroking each others hair... and then we kissed... and my stomach had butterflies again, like in the old days... and the butterflies were going crazy! They were absolutely NUTS! And then I jumped up and walked a few feet away and hurled everything I had eaten that day in one go! And then I heaved a few times... then I came back and had a few sips of beer. “What happened?” “I don’t know... it just came on all of a sud”- and then she was up... running a few feet in the other direction and the SAME THING happened, although not as quickly... she panted for a while... said she was ok... and then “wait... nope”... although it was kind of cute when she did it... somehow! “What the fuck!” she said... “what were those?”

“I’m not sure... we can look them up on your phone, maybe?”

She looked them up and it turned out they were Dilaudid! Basically one of the most powerful opiates sold in pill form! After the yakking incident, our stomachs calmed down and the opiates made us warm and fuzzy and a little bit sweaty, but we managed to get through some clumsy love-making, in spite of the sexual side-effects of the pills... it took a little time and coaxing, but when I was with Kari, I was relaxed and completely aroused... in body and mind. Anything was possible with her.

We lay on the quilt looking up at the sky, naked and wrapped in the quilt to keep the bugs off... and unable to keep our bodies from touching... our hands from stroking... just feeling as blissful as could be.

The moon was so bright... as we lay there with the sound of the frogs and the creatures of the night keeping us company... Kari sat up suddenly and said “I hear my friend!”

“What do you mean?”

She stood up, her beautiful naked curves showing in the moonlight... and yelled out “WHOOO HA WHOOO”... and off in the distance a barn owl called back to her.

“Did you hear?”

“Aww... that’s so cool”

“WHOOO HA WHOOOOO!!!”

And he called back.

“You better be careful... you’re gonna get his hopes up!”

“Oh yea?”

“Yea... he might think there’s some incredibly hot chick over here.”

“Oh?”

“Yea... he’s probably thinking there’s some super hot chick here, who’s talented, with an incredible body... beautiful big owl eyes. A sweet owl face, who would give him the best birthday party in the woods he’s ever had.... Maybe even the love of his life.”

“Yea? He thinks that?”

“yea... but what does he know, he’s just a dumb owl.”

She smacked me on the leg and smiled... and leaned in for a deep long kiss.

“whoo whoo” I whispered... like an out of breath, extremely aroused owl.

She said “I have another surprise for you...”

“you’re kidding... you mean there’s more? You know, this was the best birthday ever in my life, so far. I-... thank you.”

I was going to say “I love you”... but I didn’t. We cuddled a little longer then got dressed and took the ride back to the bunkhouse. We walked inside and the recording rig was set up and she pulled out a piece of paper and on it was the title “Secrets”.

It was a song… for me. We had done many songs, and some were involving me in the lyrics, some were certainly about Ned, as he was still a fixture in her mind, but we had collaborated on so many, it was hard to say who meant what… but this song told the story of the time when we were just friends, some time back, and the sexual tension that was there the whole time… I thought it was purely a one-sided thing! Apparently we were both feeling it. The only thing missing, as was missing from the other songs we wrote, was love. It wasn't a love song. In fact, it was a rockin' SEX song, which I guess I'll take! It even goes as far as to say "you're making me so infatuated… but I think love is overrated!"

Fair enough… I was kinda glad I didn't say it earlier… and it being my birthday, she would have felt some obligation to say it back to me… I decided she would have to say it… I would never cave to pressure. It was her ball game, and we both knew it!

So we worked on the song tirelessly from about 10PM to 3:30AM… I tried hard to throw down inspired leads, and I thought the rhythms were good and not to trite… and the drums were a crazy hodgepodge of live drums, computer hand claps and a double bass part that about killed me! At the end of it all, I thought she was disappointed, but she told me that she was just doing that to see if I could do any better, since if I blew chunks the the next time we could undo it and go back to the previous take, unlike in the old days. All in all, it was a decent song with good music that we wrote and her sexy-ass voice singing those words about us and I had nearly no memory of the song aside from her making me play every part over again for no reason and me thinking I was slipping!

I couldn't ask for a better birthday, even if I spent almost six hours working on my present… and then later on, after the Dilauded had worn off mostly, we had some more incredible sexy-time, very uninhibited and with her a lot more involved in foreplay… enjoying my body, something that wasn't so much a part of our dance up 'til this point. I pointed this out to her… "you mean I never DID THAT before? huh… maybe I was shy… I love DOING THAT!"

(I cleaned up the language a LOT! LOL)… Afterward I put my hand on her breast and felt her heart… I put my head there and listened to it pounding away as she stroked my hair…. as the events of the evening were etched indelibly in my heart-drive…

The song was too big to mix on her little computer. We agreed to come back to it and somehow get it on my pro-tools system at my house, where I had a big-ass MAC system that could throw around 24 tracks like they were nothing… but that never happened… and after a while, we forgot the song even existed… so many other

songs were done and this night's song just somehow slipped our minds. I found it recently, as I was going through her things... her computer hard drive had it hidden in another file for another song... and I looked at it and wondered what it was... "Secret"... sounds like something I needed to hear! I actually had little memory of doing it, after all the other songs we did... so I checked the date on the pro-tools file and did a double-take "oh my god!" and the memories came flooding back! I remembered the night, the golf cart ride and the sexy time... but the song had slipped my mind for over 8 years! I quickly tried to mix it on her computer and quickly realized the reason it never was mixed was because it was TOO huge of a file... so I bounced the whole file over to a thumb drive and onto the MAC... and a new Kari Jo song was born! Everyone was amazed to hear the story and the new song that came from it. It was my birthday present from happier times... finally coming to me. Thank you Kari, for this night, this song, and the love that we made. We were both in love, but hadn't dared to say it yet.

Sean and Kari (Dolly and the Moon Drops) -Secretshttps://archive.org/download/kari-and-sean-secrets-ambient-mix-2022/Kari%20and%20Sean%20-%20Secrets%20AMBIENT%20MIX%202022.mp3

The next year was packed with the new reformed AB band gigs, and recording sessions with the Kari... She asked me if she could bring Lisa over. I told her that would be cool. I knew it was her only good friend at the time.

Kari had been coming to my place for a while and we would hang out and listen to music and play songs together. We also had gotten into partying together. It seemed harmless at the time. I would get a little blow and a pain pill. We would sniff a few lines and she would chew up the pill and stick her white tongue out at me. We did this for a while, and sometimes we just hung out with no party favors. But she wanted to show Lisa a good time, so I had some blow for all of us when she got there.

I honestly thought doing blow would be a step in the right direction for Kari! And honestly, it wasn't that bad. I told her it was a way for us to party a little, have some fun and not get stuck in some cycle of addiction. I never had a problem with blow… and I told her if we didn't smoke it, we would likely be ok. I had been doing it off and on for years and never felt the need to do it all the time.

So we did that for a while and mainly it was like I said. I'm not saying that it's a good thing… but where she had been was so much worse. So we were hanging out, the three of us. And Lisa was cool and charming, with a southern drawl and a very mellow vibe. She was a good friend to Kari… and her mom was similar to hers… overbearing and negative. So we all had a nice night together, but at the end, Kari

had to take her back home and couldn't stay. She lived next door to Kari… which in that part of Missouri, was about two miles away, and they had to drive an hour back to Missouri. They were riding back, a little high from the blow… and she asked her;

"so what's the deal with Sean? You two look so cute together… and he seems nice… smart… talented… you two sound awesome together when you sing!"

"I know… Sean is the love of my life, Lisa."

"And?"

"And… he's too good for me. He sees what no guy has seen in me, besides Ned. And we've already been together longer than me and Ned… he won't take my shit and calls me out when I lie… I'm not just a pretty face or a good singer… he cares, and… I don't deserve him. I'm too fucked up."

"So have you told him everything? Does he know about Ned?"

"He knows that Ned and I were engaged. He knows that he died. I told him that he died before we met. I didn't know how to tell him that he just died two years ago. I know he thinks I'm crazy, grieving about a guy that I never even mentioned before… and of course, I am… I just didn't know how to say it. You know I got pregnant the last year that Ned was here? I told him, but I didn't tell Sean. And I think Ned knew it wasn't his."

"Oh, Kari… you think he knew?"

"yea… he didn't believe me. He didn't say what he didn't believe. But I got a test to show him. And he just said 'I don't believe you'"

"So you think he knew it wasn't his?"

"yea… I think"

"So what happened?"

"I lost it. I was going to get an abortion… but I lost it. It's probably just as well. I'm pretty sure it was Sean's… it's just another thing that makes me feel like a complete low-life. That Sean... he can do better"…

"So what's gonna happen? He wants you. He knows a lot about you. He deserves to have you and know all of these things…"

"I'm going to be good enough some day. I'm gonna get this crazy shit behind me and we're going to be together… at least, I think so. Unless he just gives up on me. He's been close to that. I don't know why he's still around after all the crazy shit I've done. I love him. But I haven't told him. I'm pretty sure he loves me too. But he's scared to say it. It's just how things are, for now… but something will happen, eventually. He'll probably just get tired of my shit and dump me. I deserve it…"

“I don’t think so, Kari… I see it too. He’s way into you. He’s giving you the space you need… it’s a good thing. You’re lucky. Don’t **** this up, darlin!”

“I **** everything up, Lisa.”

Lisa told me about this 11 years later. After Kari had passed. She was the one person I talked to, to try and make sense of those early days and it helped me. If only to understand what was going on. I understand Kari’s confusion and even her self-destruction. I’ve felt it too… so much… since she’s gone.

A few years later, Lisa moved away. She was Kari’s only real friend at the time. She recorded a song with me for her. It was just something we threw together at the beginning of another session, but it’s sweet and shows who Kari was. And how sweet she was if you were lucky enough to be her friend. This is her spoken word and music piece for Lisa.

https://archive.org/download/PsycoMagnetWGuitar/lisas%20theme.mp3